

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 1645

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, WZ

SUBJ: KING SOBHUZA'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION

REF: MBABANE 1629

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. SUMMARY. ON SEPTEMBER 26, KING SOBHUZA II GAVE HIS FIRST IMPORTANT ADDRESS TO THE SWAZI NATION SINCE HE SUSPENDED PARLIAMENT AND ABOLISHED THE CONSTITUTION IN APRIL 1973. HIS SPEECH, WHICH LASTED AN HOUR AND A HALF (PLUS TRANSLATION TIME INTO ENGLISH), TOUCHED ON A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS INCLUDING THE CONSTITUTION, THE NATIONAL CENSUS, PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, THE PRIME MINISTER'S FORTHCOMING RETIREMENT (BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY), AND THE PROBLEMS OF DISUNITY AND LEADERSHIP IN SWAZILAND. ALTHOUGH NO TEXT OF THE KING'S REMARKS IS YET AVAILABLE, THE SPEECH WAS REBROADCAST OVER RADIO SWAZILAND ON SEPTEMBER 29. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CONSTITUTION. THE KING OPENED HIS REMARKS BY DESCRIBING AT SOME LENGTH THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN ESTABLISHING A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR SWAZILAND. SWAZIS HAVE THEIR OWN CULTURE AND UNITY WHICH THEY WISH TO RETAIN
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BUT AT THE SAME TIME THEY REALIZE THEY MUST ADOPT SOME MODERN

IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES. GIVEN THE SITUATION IN AFRICA TODAY, HOWEVER, WHERE CAN THEY TURN FOR ADVICE? WHERE ARE CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS WORKING WELL? THIS IS THE QUESTION FACING THE NATION'S LEADERS AND THIS IS WHY SWAZIS MUST BE PATIENT WHILE GOS LEADERSHIP ATTEMPTS TO DEVELOP A CONSTITUTION WHICH WILL BE RIGHT FOR SWAZILAND AND WILL LAST.

3. CENSUS. THE KING STRESSED AGAIN, AS HE HAD IN HIS NATIONAL DAY SPEECH, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FORTHCOMING NATIONAL CENSUS. THIS IS A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN, HE SAID, SINCE WE MUST HAVE PROPER STATISTICS IN ORDER TO PLAN. FOR EXAMPLE, WE MUST KNOW HOW MANY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN THERE ARE IN ORDER TO KNOW HOW MANY CLASSROOMS TO BUILD. THE SAME IS TRUE IN DETERMINING THE JOB MARKET AND THE NEED FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING. WE MUST ELIMINATE, HE SAID, THE SITUATION WHERE WE HAVE FOREIGN WORKERS FOR SOME JOBS BECAUSE THERE ARE NO QUALIFIED SWAZIS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THERE ARE SOME SWAZIS WHO CANNOT FIND WORK.

4. THE ENVIRONMENT. THE KING THEN MENTIONED THAT MANY SPECIES OF FLORA AND FAUNA WHICH WERE ONCE COMMON IN SWAZILAND ARE DISAPPEARING. HE BLAMED THE TRADITIONAL MEDICINE MEN WHO ARE STRIPPING THE COUNTRY OF SOME TRADITIONAL PLANTS AND SELLING THEM IN JOHANNESBURG. HE URGED EVERY SWAZI TO BE ALERT FOR INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND AND TO DISSUADE THE GUILTY FROM CONTINUING THIS PRACTICE.

5. DISUNITY AND LEADERSHIP. IN THE FINAL SECTION OF HIS SPEECH, THE KING SAID THAT THE GREAT THREAT TO THE SWAZI NATION WAS DISUNITY AND THE MOST LIKELY CAUSE OF DISUNITY WAS THE SEDUCTION OF THE PEOPLE BY FALSE LEADERS. THESE "SABOTEURS", MAKE PROMISES THEY KNOW THEY CANNOT KEEP; THEY TRY TO USE THE ORDINARY MAN TO FIGHT THEIR BATTLES BY MISLEADING HIM. BEWARE, THE KING SAID, OF THE PRODIGAL WHO SAYS HE WANTS TO HELP YOU WHEN IN FACT HE WANTS TO STEAL YOUR PROPERTY. BY FOLLOWING SUCH LEADERS, YOU WILL LOSE WHAT LITTLE YOU HAVE. EVEN IN THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA NOT EVERYONE IS EQUALLY HAPPY, RICH AND WELL-FED. IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU HE CAN, ASK HIM WHERE HE HAS PROVEN HE CAN DO SO.

6. IN HIS SPEECH, THE KING MENTIONED THAT THERE WAS ONE OTHER
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SUBJECT HIS MINISTERS HAD URGED HIM TO RAISE BUT THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO POSTPONE. HE HAS CALLED A MEETING OF THE EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS COUNCILS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2 TO DISCUSS THIS
SUBJECT. END UNCLASSIFIED

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7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE KING COUGHED OCCASIONALLY DURING HIS SPEECH, HIS VOICE WAS STRONG AND HE SEEMED TO HAVE CLEARLY

IN MIND WHAT HE WANTED TO SAY. AS USUAL, HE FREQUENTLY SPOKE IN PARABLES WHOSE MEANING WAS PERHAPS DELIBERATELY VAGUE.

8. THE KING'S DECISION TO COMMENT ON CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM INDICATES HIS AWARENESS OF THE GROWING CRITICISM OF THE DELAY IN MOVING TOWARD A NEW CONSTITUTION. HIS WORDS ON THIS SUBJECT SUGGEST THAT HE IS CONVINCED THAT HIS SLOW, CAUTIOUS APPROACH IS CORRECT AND THAT HE WILL NOT BE HURRIED.

9. THE KING'S LONG DISSERTATION ON THE DANGERS OF DISUNITY AND "SABOTEURS" COULD BE INTERPRETED AS A VEILED ATTACK ON THE YOUNG "MODERNISTS" WHO ARE INFLUENCED BY FOREIGN IDEOLOGIES AND WHO WISH TO MOVE AWAY FROM SWAZI TRADITIONS. HE MAY HAVE IN MIND SUCH MEN AS DUMISA DLAMINI, A YOUNG, HIGH RANKING PRINCE, WHO WAS A LEADING MEMBER OF THE NNLC AND RECENTLY RETURNED TO SWAZILAND AFTER STUDYING FOR SEVERAL YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES. HE MAY ALSO BE CONCERNED ABOUT IDEAS COMING FROM MOZAMBIQUE.

10. THE KING IS CLEARLY CONCERNED THAT A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL LIFE AND THE REAPPEARANCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES LED BY AMBITIOUS MEN WILL DISRUPT SWAZI'S PRESENT UNITY AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS. WHAT HE DOES NOT SEEM TO REALIZE IS THAT UNLESS THERE IS SOME POLITICAL STRUCTURE IN PLACE BEFORE HE DIES, THE CHANCES FOR SUCH DISUNITY WILL BE MUCH GREATER. END
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